

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container, comprising:
a blow molded plastic container body having a ~~circular~~ base, a finish opposite
said base, and a sidewall extending therebetween;
a portion of said sidewall having a plurality of panels positioned
circumferentially about said sidewall portion to form a multi-sided
sidewall structure;
each adjacent pair of said panels interconnecting to form an ~~obtuse~~ angle
therebetween and to form a continuous longitudinally-extending post
structure therebetween; and
at least selected ones of said panels having a section thereof formed outwardly
bowed of the container at a radius of curvature within a predetermined
range of radius of curvatures;
said radius of curvature of each of said outwardly bowed sections extending on
a plane perpendicular to an imaginary central axis extending
longitudinally through the container; and
said radius of curvature of each outwardly bowed section varying as said
outwardly bowed section extends in a direction parallel to said
imaginary central axis;

whereby, when the container is hot-filled and capped and as the hot-filled and capped container is permitted to cool, said outwardly bowed section flattens to accommodate induced vacuum created within the capped and filled container.

Claim 2 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 1, wherein said sidewall has an outwardly extending, circumferentially-disposed, circular bumper.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 2, wherein at least selected ones of said panels have an inset reinforcement area adjacent said bumper, each of said inset areas extending between an adjacent pair of said post structures and terminating a spaced distance from said post structures, whereby said inset areas function to reinforce and strengthen said bumper and post structures to prevent deformation thereof.

Claim 4 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 3, wherein said bumper is a lower label bumper located adjacent said base, and wherein said outwardly bowed sections of said panels are located above said inset areas.

Claim 5 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 1, wherein said outwardly bowed sections of said panels flex inwardly when said container is hot-filled and capped and as the hot-filled and capped container is permitted to cool to accommodate induced vacuum created within the capped and filled container.

Claim 6 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 3, wherein said sidewall portion includes at least five panels each having an as-formed outwardly bowed section and an inset reinforcement area.

Claim 7 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 6, wherein said sidewall portion is formed from six identical panels positioned side by side.

Claims 8-9 (canceled).

Claim 10 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein said radius of curvature of each outwardly bowed section increases as said outwardly bowed section extends toward said finish.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein said radius of curvature of each outwardly bowed section decreases as said outwardly bowed section extends toward said finish.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein said range of radius of curvatures includes a maximum radius of curvature and a minimum radius of curvature, and wherein said maximum radius of curvature is within 5% of said minimum radius of curvature.

Claim 13 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 1, wherein said sidewall portion having said panels provides a label mounting area, and wherein said sidewall includes a circular upper label bumper above said label mounting area and a circular lower label bumper below said label mounting area.

Claim 14 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 1, wherein said finish is selected from the group consisting of an upstanding threaded narrow neck finish, an upstanding threaded wide mouth finish, an upstanding injection molded finish, and an upstanding blown finish.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container, comprising:
a blow molded plastic container body having a circular base, a sidewall, a
circular lower bumper between said base and sidewall, and a dome
having an upstanding finish opposite said base;
said sidewall having ~~a plurality of~~ at least five panels positioned
circumferentially in a side-by-side relationship about said sidewall
thereby forming a multi-sided sidewall structure;
each adjacent pair of said panels interconnecting to form an obtuse angle
therebetween and a vertically-extending post structure which extends
continuously through said multi-sided sidewall structure; and
each panel, as-formed, having a section which is arcuate in a plane
perpendicular to an imaginary central axis extending longitudinally
through the container, each arcuate section providing said panel with a
slightly outward bow and having a predetermined radius of curvature

within a predetermined range of radius of curvatures, and said radius of curvature of said arcuate sections varying as said arcuate sections extend in a direction parallel to said imaginary central axis;

each panel having an inset circumferentially-extending reinforcement area adjacent said lower bumper, each of said inset areas extending between an adjacent pair of said post structures and terminating a spaced distance from said post structures to reinforce and strengthen said circular lower bumper and post structures, and each of said arcuate sections of said panels flexing inwardly for accommodating induced vacuum created when the container is hot-filled, capped and cooled.

Claims 16-17 (canceled).

Claim 18 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim ~~16~~ 15, wherein said radius of curvature of said arcuate sections decreases as said arcuate sections extend toward said base.

Claim 19 (currently amended): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim ~~16~~ 15, wherein said radius of curvature said arcuate sections increases as said arcuate sections extend toward said base.

Claim 20 (original): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 18, wherein said range of radius of curvatures includes a maximum radius of curvature and a minimum radius of curvature, and wherein said maximum radius of curvature is within 5% of said minimum radius of curvature.

Claim 21 (new): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 1, wherein said angle formed between each adjacent pair of said panels is obtuse.

Claim 22 (new): A hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 1, wherein said base is circular.